without insurance claim, missing components, duplicate shipment, inventory, cancellation, transferred order, and never shipped.

20 124. (Amended) A method of establishing an end-to-end business-to-business commerce system for the sale, or sale and service, of product items, using a Web-enabled relational database management system running on a server platform, the method comprising the steps of:

for at least one business partner, storing within the database, in accordance with a single database schema, all current records required to perform a full spectrum of business functions throughout a life cycle of each product item, the full spectrum of business function including at least electronic commerce functions, order processing functions, accounting, shipping, and customer returns; and

storing in the database customized business rules for dealing with different business partners, the business rules including rules concerning more than one of the business functions ,wherein there are sequentially interacting flows between business functions enabled by the database and wherein the business rules affect the sequentially interacting flows.